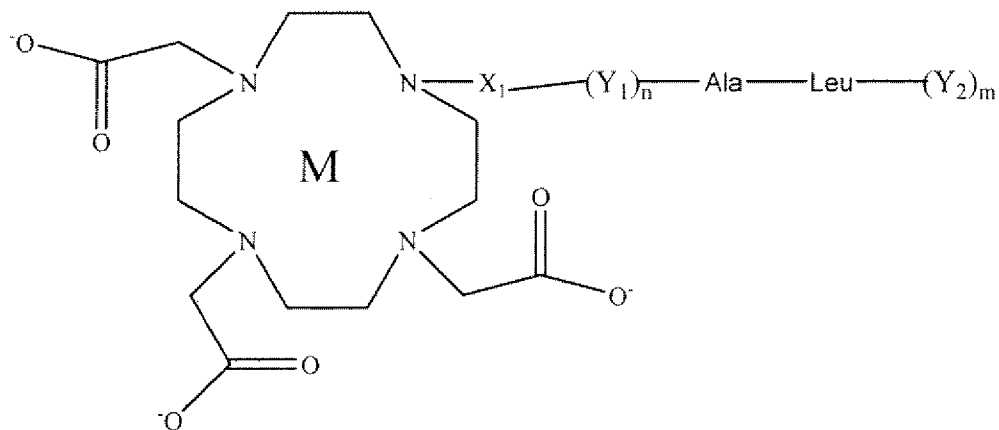


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-18 (**cancelled**)

19. (**Previously presented**) A method comprising:

a) administering an MRI agent having the formula:



Y_1 and Y_2 are independently amino acid moieties;

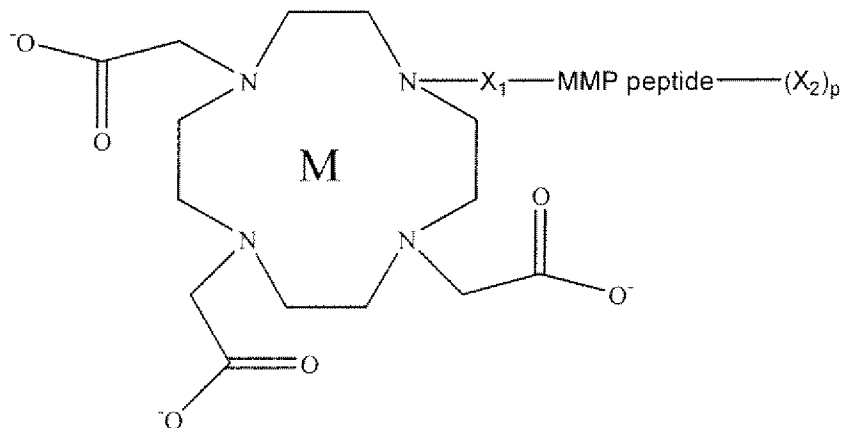
n and m are each independently an integer from 0 to 5

X_1 is an independent linker; and

salts thereof.

20. (**Previously presented**) A method comprising:

a) administering an MRI agent having the formula::



wherein

M is a paramagnetic metal ion selected from the group consisting of Gd(III), Fe(III), Mn(II), Y(III), Cr(III), Eu(III), and Dy(III);

X₁ and X₂ are each independent linkers;

MMP is a matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) active peptide;

p is an integer from 0 to 1; and

salts thereof;

- b) contacting said MRI agent under conditions wherein said MMP active peptide interacts with a MMP such that the T₁ of the said MRI agent is decreased; and,
 - c) producing a magnetic resonance image of a cell, tissue, or patient.
21. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 19, wherein said M is Gd(III).
 22. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein said M is Gd(III).
 23. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is selected from the group consisting of an aryl or alkyl group.
 24. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein X₁ is selected from the group consisting of an aryl or alkyl group.
 25. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein X₂ is selected from the group consisting of an aryl group, an alkyl group, a carbohydrate group, a nucleic acid group, a lipid group, and combinations thereof.
 26. **(Currently amended)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, Y₁ is -Pro-Met- when n = 2, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 3 (SEQ ID NO:1).
 27. **(Currently amended)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, Y₁ is -Met- when n = 1, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 3 (SEQ ID NO:2).
 28. **(Currently amended)** A method according to claim 19, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, n = 0, and Y₂ is -Trp-Met-Arg when m = 3 (SEQ ID NO:3).
 29. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 20, wherein said MMP is MMP 7.
 30. **(Currently amended)** A method according to claim 20, wherein X₁ is -(CH₂CO)-, said MMP peptide comprises Leu-Met-Trp-Arg, and p = 0 (SEQ ID NO:20).